

First record of Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* for Uganda

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Première mention du Pluvier fauve *Pluvialis fulva* pour l'Ouganda. Un groupe de six Pluviers fauves *Pluvialis fulva* a été observé et photographié près de la rivière Ishasha, dans le Parc National Queen Elizabeth, Ouganda, le 15 février 2007. Le Pluvier fauve niche dans l'Arctique russe et hiverne en petit nombre en Afrique de l'Est. Il est régulier le long de la côte de l'Éritrée, la Somalie et le Kenya, rare en Tanzanie, et sporadique à l'intérieur, du Soudan et l'Éthiopie au Burundi, mais n'avait pas encore été signalé de l'Ouganda.

On 15 February 2007, my wife and I visited Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda. At c.09.30 hrs, whilst driving along the grassy flats bordering the reedbeds near the Ishasha River, we spotted six unusual-looking waders. They were typically plover-like in shape and stance, with strikingly golden plumage. Although we were unable to get close without disturbing them, we succeeded in gaining good views from c.15–20 m and observed the birds for an hour with 10×40 binoculars. I took field notes and also acquired photographs (Figs. 1–2).

The birds were rather slender, not dumpy, with a prominent buffish-white supercilium and a very pale, whitish area at the bill base. They were mainly golden-buff above with a buffish-white throat which became darker lower, forming a broad golden breast-band (particularly conspicuous on two individuals). In flight, a diffuse, narrow whitish bar on the upperwing was visible, whilst the underwings were rather pale grey, grad-

ually darkening towards the base of the wing; the primary tips were also darker, but there was no black 'armpit'. The rump was dark and the feet protruded beyond the tail in flight. Legs and feet were grey-black.

After checking the identification features in Stevenson & Fanshawe (2002) and Sinclair & Ryan (2003), and discussing the finer points with Adam Riley via SMS while still watching the birds, we concluded that they were Pacific Golden Plovers *Pluvialis fulva*. I informed Derek Pomeroy who, together with Morris Matseba *et al.*, observed all six birds at the same place c.2 hours later, and confirmed the identification.

Pacific Golden Plover breeds in northern Siberia and is a winter visitor in small numbers to East Africa. It is regular in coastal Eritrea, Somalia and Kenya, rare in coastal Tanzania, and sporadic inland from Sudan and Ethiopia to Burundi (Urban *et al.* 1986, Stevenson & Fanshawe 2002). *P. fulva* was, however, previously unrecorded in



Figures 1–2. Pacific Golden Plovers *Pluvialis fulva*, Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda, 15 February 2007 (Allan Kirby)

Pluviers fauves *Pluvialis fulva*, Parc National Queen Elizabeth, Ouganda, 15 février 2007 (Allan Kirby)

Uganda (Carswell *et al.* 2005), making this the first record for the country.

Acknowledgements

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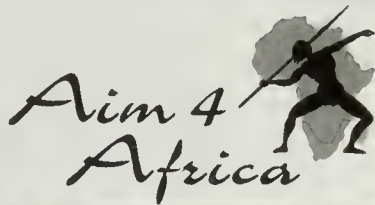
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